

The Republican.

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TO THE REPUBLICANS OF THE ISLAND OF GREAT BRITAIN.

Dorchester Gaol, April 16,
CITIZENS, Year 3, of the Spanish Revolution.

THERE is now scarce a doubt remaining but that the Russians are waiting only for the approach of summer to open their campaign against Turkey. Nothing positive is yet stated, but from all that is insinuated, the question of war is no longer doubtful. Let us rejoice at this measure, for it must accelerate all our expectations. There will be a grand movement in the South of Europe, the moment it is seen that Russia and Turkey are at blows in earnest. I sincerely wish them equal strength, a long struggle, and a mutual exhaustion. As this will be a war among fanatics and slaves, the longer it is continued, and the more direful its effects to each other, the more important will be the consequence to the philosophic and philanthropic part of mankind. For myself I can say, that I should not be sorry to see the Mahometans penetrate to St. Petersburg and Vienna; although I fear there is more danger of the Russian Autocrat's getting to Constantinople.

There is nothing passing at home worthy of mention, except it be resemblances of the Irish disposition spreading among the suffering classes of this country. Every thing as to change is a matter of complete uncertainty: except it be the gradual or rather rapid change of property. Castle-reagh will never quit the wreck whilst he can keep his head above water, and live on the remains of the ship's provisions.

Perhaps, it will amuse you to be informed that in the new Temple of Reason my publications are sold by CLOCK WORK!! In the shop is the dial on which is written every publication for sale: the purchaser enters and turns the hand of the dial to the publication he wants, when, on de-

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positing his money, the publication drops down before him. There is now scarce an occasion for speaking. This is the best description I can give you of the matter at present; but I understand it answers perfectly well, and the interest excited is again nearly equal to what it was at 55, Fleet Street, before the King became jealous of my prosperity and growing power, and, king-like, made war upon me in violation of all former treaties.

I must lay aside all other matters this week to give you some news from Dorchester Gaol, and to shew you how our Keeper has out-Bridled Bridle during an alarm of fire.

On Thursday evening, the 11th inst. a stack of chimnies, in this Gaol burst forth in a violent blaze, and created no small degree of alarm. The prisoners had just been locked up for the night, and as the fire broke out in the same wing of the Gaol in which my sister was confined, and as a small chimney in her cell formed one of the stack, she had a most narrow escape of suffocation. The manner in which she was locked and bolted up left her not a crevice for air but what came through the chimney, and the moment the fire began to blaze, a column of smoke poured down upon her, that almost deprived her of her senses. A bolted wooden door, and a locked iron grated door, were opposed to her escape. There were four women in the same wing of the prison, with her, but not one on the same floor, and she was the only one of the five who was locked up in a cell, as there are very heavy iron gates at the end of each passage which are always locked; and although the other women, who are chiefly convicted felons, could, at a moment's call, assist each other, yet no one could come to my sister but the Keeper or Turnkeys. By some unaccountable exertions she wrenched open her inner door which was bolted on the outer side, and admitted air sufficient to prevent suffocation: by the time she had accomplished this, and was nearly exhausted with smoke, fright, and screaming, the general cry of fire throughout the Gaol brought the very humane Keeper to her cell-door. But he came not to appease her agonized feelings. His first salute was: "*Oh! damn you! it is you then, is it, that have set fire to the Prison!*" The brute never offered to release her from such a perilous situation, although the smoke and fire came pouring down the chimney in the most terrific manner, and every locked up prisoner in the place was yelling and howling for release. No, he passed on without giving her the least hope of safety, and gave loose to the most savage pas-

sions, and the most horrid oaths and curses. This treatment so terrified her as to accomplish what the former fright had left unfinished, it brought on fainting and hysterics. At length, the matron came and opened her iron door, and amidst a shower of curses from the Keeper, she removed my sister into the passage of his house, and was obliged to leave her in fits on the stair case to be at his heels again.

Mrs. Carlile and myself being in the back part of the prison, could see nothing of the fire but the showers that fell like a snow-fall. The yell of the prisoners was terrific, and a general cry was set up that the Chapel was on fire. Now the Chapel formed the only entrance to our wards, and if any thing like a fire was to occur in the Chapel we could escape no way but through the wall. On hearing this, Mrs. Carlile became dreadfully alarmed, and we both began to tremble at the idea of premature labour at such a moment. We rang our bell for a quarter of an hour, and no one came near us, when I resolved, let what would be the consequence, to see the extent of the danger. I had a pair of heavy dumb bells in the room, and with one of those in a few minutes I opened a way through a thick door. After all the noise of beating down the door, no one came near us, but now I could see we were in no immediate danger, and Mrs. Carlile became pacified.

The wind being high, the quantity of fire that flew from the chimnies caught the roof of the chapel, but it was soon extinguished, and all the alarm ended without injury to any one but my sister, who has not yet recovered her fright and illness. No information was given to me of what had happened to her, for two hours, and even then another hour had elapsed before I could get to see her, although the Doctor was brought to her, and I believe all who saw the state she was in, doubted of her recovery. The wife of the keeper displayed more humanity, and studiously assisted to recover her. When all had become quiet, and the Doctor had left her, so late as eleven o'clock at night, I was told I might come and see her; I found her in the keeper's kitchen in a dreadful tremor, and suffering violent pain in the side. I demanded to see the keeper, but was told I could not, and she instantly informed me of his conduct towards her. It was with difficulty she could move up the staircase to my room, and by my support; and I now fear the consequences of the fright.

The conduct of the keeper was infamous, and the trial

proved him totally unfit to have the lives of so many persons entrusted to his keeping. His swearing and terrific countenance created more confusion among the assistants than the fire itself. The matron who is the wife of one of the turnkeys, a mother of four children, and a very decent woman, he repeatedly called in the most furious manner "*a damned bitch*" although, if one of his prisoners happens to be heard swearing, his punishment is to have his hands ironed, and locked behind him two or three days, during which time he must be fed by another, and seek the assistance of another prisoner even to unbutton and button his small clothes, and otherwise assist him in case of necessity. As an act of common justice and wholesome example, the keeper ought to have been hand-cuffed for a month in the same manner.

The moment I heard of his brutal insult and conduct towards my sister, I resolved to charge him before the Magistrates of his misconduct. I sent him a note the next morning requesting a sight of the first magistrate that came to the prison, and the next day being a Gaol Sessions I charged him before the Magistrates with brutal conduct towards my sister, and general misconduct throughout the alarm of the fire, particularly his imputation on my sister of having set fire to the Prison. I had apprized one of the magistrates of my intention in his presence the day before, so when they all came I found they had arranged the matter between themselves, that he was to admit every thing, but to apologize and plead his confused and alarmed feelings for the safety of the building. I called on the magistrates to make him sensible that he had no right to damn or insult any prisoner, to which they readily acceded; and here the matter ended, with a slight reprimand. I must say I never heard the man swear an oath before, or ever use the least improper language to a prisoner; although he is a complete disciplinarian, and attempts to rule by terror; a principle that I by no means approve. I have always held an idea that if a dignified persuasive instruction will not command a proper respect and attention from assistants, terror will never do it effectually.

The ward we occupy is called the female debtors' ward, and consists of a good sized floor, on the second story, divided into two rooms, separated by a stair-case and passage. Whenever there has been an absence of female debtors, which has been rare of late, we possess both rooms, which forms a tolerably fair range, and enables us to open

a current of air through both. On coming to the gaol, my sister, after much conference and hesitation, was allowed to sleep in the vacant room, although our brutal keepers had previously arranged that she should sleep in one of the convict cells, or have our room parted off to form a sleeping corner for her, although there was a vacant room open before us. The latter case would have rendered our room quite dark and still more unwholesome both by day and night, to avoid which my sister preferred the cell. However, she slept the first month in the adjoining large room, but the moment an old woman of threescore, a female debtor, was brought in, she was not allowed to sleep in the same room, and without the least ceremony was put to sleep in a damp cell that had not been used for some time. The window of this cell was of peculiar construction, and each row of glass played on a sort of swivel by means of iron work. This iron work being rusted there was first some difficulty to admit the least air, but when it was wrenched open, there was no shutting it again; so that for the last three months she has been exposed to all the winds and rains that came, or to a complete darkness, by having the shutters nailed fast on one side, and a close bolted door on the other. The first ill effects of this treatment was a violent inflammation in her knee, by being compelled to lay on her fixed iron bedstead close to the damp wall. However, nothing serious appears to have resulted from this, but her constitution, with such treatment, and the fright of the fire, has received a severe shock the consequences of which I begin to fear; and most certainly, if she dies within a year of this time I will indict the keeper and visiting magistrates for murder, as soon as any thing better than Lancashire law is found in the country.

With the exception of the irons, there is no felon in the place treated in a manner so injurious to health as we have been treated, and what is equally singular, the female debtors, in consequence of our example, are exposed to the same treatment. They are now three women with one child locked up in one room, and, if the weather allows, they are only allowed to walk in the air one hour each day.

The excuse of the Magistrates is, "We have no conveniences for such prisoners as you are: we have complained to the Court of King's Bench for sending you here." But this is all a shuffle. The prison is a most healthy, commodious place; but the little Priestly Despots dread the idea of our coming near any other prisoners without a watch

upon us. The severity of our treatment arises entirely out of their personal feelings and prejudices.

The general treatment of the prisoners in this place is not bad, particularly in the summer, when they are not locked up so many hours in their sleeping-cells as in the winter. Their food consists of a pound and half of bread a day, baked in the prison, just as it comes from the mill, without any separation of the husks from the flour. The only thing in addition to this bread is about three pints of soup each day, which is alternately thickened with peas, not the best, and barley-meal. This stuff is complete pig's-meat, and but few prisoners can touch it on first coming in, particularly the women, who loathe it for weeks if they can get at any thing else. I have never tasted the soup, but of the bread I have frequently purchased a loaf, and would as willingly eat it as what we get from the town bakers, being partial to sweet brown bread, even with the bran. However, as many of the prisoners are put to hard labour, I do not think this a sufficiency of food.

Irons are still in vogue, but not so much so as when I first came to the prison. I then found that even poachers were ironed, but now I see that irons are confined to felons. It is painful occasionally to see boys of fourteen years old dragging about heavy irons, because their charge is felony. Every thing here is the result of custom, and not of any sense of humanity or fellow feeling: in such places abuses wear off gradually, and more from a sense of shame than any thing else.

The only extra punishments that ever I have witnessed in the gaol consist of the hand-cuffing behind the back, as before-mentioned, and a locking up in what are called refractory cells. A serious affair arose out of this hand-cuffing just before I came to the gaol. An Irishwoman being sent in here a prisoner with others for exercising the privilege of locomotion, or what our Aristocrats term vagrancy, had a quarrel with her fellow-prisoners, and was locked up in a cell alone, with her hands ironed behind her. Having a little fire, by some means or other her clothes took fire, and she could not assist herself until she was burnt in a most dreadful manner, and died a few weeks after. As to the real conduct or character of the woman I can say nothing; she has been represented to me to have been of the most violent kind, but certain it is, that her death arose out of the fastening her hands behind her back. The woman died about a fortnight or three weeks after I came to the gaol, and this is

the only unnatural or suspicious death that has happened since I have been here.

The only species of bodily torture practised, except the band-cuffing, is the flogging, or what the law calls whipping. The public whippings that I have seen in Devonshire I always considered were more intended for degradation than torture. In the town in which I was born it was the custom to give a man one stripe with a rope's-end at every gutter, but this was nothing worth calling a whipping, and amounted to scarce any thing more than leading the person through the town, stripped to the waste. I have heard the Newgate whippings are severe, but in this gaol, for the time being, they amount to what is called military flogging. The resounding lash and the groan or scream of the sufferer can be heard at a considerable distance. I view this system as the last relic of torture, or the infliction of corporeal pang, and the sooner it is abolished the more to the credit of the country. It must be far worse punishment than the pillory, and quite as bad as the cutting of ears. Let some of the canting Religionists in the Parliament look to it. When our gaols are ridded of the cat-o'-nine-tails and all sorts of irons, then we may be allowed to speak of humanity. At present I have no hesitation in saying, that there is no more humanity in the persons who superintend this gaol, than there was two or three centuries back. In point of inflicting torture, they go as far as they dare go with safety to themselves. It is popular knowledge that has abolished the rack, the thumb-screw, and the pillory, and this same power must abolish the use of irons and the lash. Aristocrats look at nothing but custom and precedent, and to all change they must be driven by their personal fears and the force of public knowledge.

There was not the least blame attached to my sister in regard to the chimney being on fire, it was evidently the result of a mouldering fire from the washerwoman's fire below, as a loud explosion took place at combustion within a few minutes of her being locked up. Every attempt was made to throw the blame upon her, only it happened that the Matron kindled her fire and proved that she could add nothing to it.

From the specimen we had of the Keeper's conduct on this occasion, we may pray to have nothing like a fire in the place.

R. CARLILE.

TO THE CHRISTIAN JUDGE BAILEY.

LETTER VII.

I HAVE neglected to number my former Letters to you, but I begin to perceive the necessity of it as a matter of reference, therefore I begin with number seven.

I left off in my last with the Canticle, which should rather be called a general invocation upon all matter, animate and inanimate, to bless the Lord, instead of asking a blessing from him. Rather than a rational prayer or song of praise, it is fitter to rank with the invocations of the witches in Shakspeare's Macbeth.

The next six articles form selections from the book of Luke and Psalms, and as they are moderate, as Jewish rant, I pass them without comment. But there is a note of yours on one of the selections from Luke that arrests my attention, from its notorious falsehood: you say, "One of the peculiarities of Christianity is, that it inculcates meekness, forbearance, forgiveness of injuries, and whatever has a tendency to prevent or terminate dissension." This is the theory of Christianity; the practical part of it has ever been the reverse, and I am very willing to take you, Sir, as an instance. Christianity, practically, has been the religion of rancour, torture, bloodshed, and every thing that disgraces or disturbs society. The moral part of the book called the New Testament, or even of the fictitious life of Jesus himself, is overbalanced by the immoral part. It is very far from containing an uncontaminated code of morals.

I pass on to what is called the *Apostle's Creed*, which forms a much more stupid and ridiculous collection of words than even the *Lord's Prayer*. It is used in conjunction with the latter to charm away all evil; and the examination of its contents will shew that it ought to have been long since consigned to the same oblivion with the incantations of witches, sorcerers, magicians, and necromancers. It begins, "I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth." The belief in one God can scarcely be deemed objectionable so long as science remains in a state of infancy, as at present, and so long as any part of Nature, or the operations of matter on matter, remains unexplored: but the great mischief arising from the use of the word is, that it is a gratuitous postulate to which the ignorant mind

will be always attaching some unnatural or immaterial ideas. If we could once bring the whole human race, or any great portion, to the practice of believing nothing, or troubling their minds with nothing unproved, then the word *God* would be found a superfluous word: but it seems to be so much the property of the uncultivated mind to fabricate airy fictions, and to believe and admire every thing that seems strange and wonderful, that it seems almost necessary to make the word *God* significant and expressive of the operations of matter upon matter, as the best means of checking and finally annihilating superstition. If we reduce the word *God* to a signification of the great whole of matter, and as nothing independent of matter, we shall proceed on sure and proved ground, when we say, "in him (or in it) we move and have our being:" but there is an absolute necessity for ridding the human mind of all ideas of spiritualities to make way for a sound moral feeling, and a strong mental power and capacity to practise it, in spite of custom or prejudice. So long as the human mind retains notions of spiritual powers, and of being itself an immortal spirit, destined for eternal sensitive existence, so long will it be out of order and insane—so long will it be unnatural and carried beyond its proper sphere. It is necessary, in a moral point of view, that man be taught that his sentient principle is material, and that it must change and decay with his body as part of the same organization. When he is taught this, he will be much less a brute than at present; because, he will feel not only a common equality with his own species, but he will also feel that it is a part of morality to extend happiness to other animals under his controul; for wherever sensation exists, the principles of pleasure and pain exist with it. Whilst man is filled with notions of being a God, or demi-god in embryo, he will never possess a fellow animal feeling, nor cease his plans of torture upon weaker animals: but bring back his ideas to the full extent of animal power and existence, make him know that his own organization is passive, and must yield to the common fate of the most trifling part of the animal creation, and you will place his reasoning faculties in a natural train, and capacitate him for a studied improvement of his own fleeting hours, and a studied lessening of animal misery, as far as his powers extend; you will then distinguish him as the chief of animals, the guide and protector of all.

We cannot say what the operations of matter have produced on other globes, but we may fairly presume that

there are no animals superior to man upon them, as, comparatively speaking, the mind of man can embrace the whole of them; it is calculated to embrace every thing short of the one infinite, therefore nothing can possibly exceed its powers in the scale of perception, for that which exceeds its *embryo* powers must be the one infinite, which has not the capacity of perception or sensation, and is proved almost to demonstration to be a necessitated but senseless body.

When we read the words, "*Maker of Heaven and Earth*," our ideas extend not beyond a workman; and when we know, as we do now know, to a certainty, that the notion of heaven is altogether an illusion, and that there are no other places on which our ideas can rest but similar globes to that we inhabit, and from which we have our being, we can feel nothing but a contemptuous pity for the ignorant mythologist that compiled this Creed, and for the ignorant and fanatical idolators who continue to repeat and believe it. When man confined his ideas of matter to the earth, and fancied whatever he beheld in the regions of space to be mere ornamental appendages to it, he might then well conclude that there was a superior place and power above it, upon which all depended. He had no ideas of the perpetual motion of the earth, and that it was but a small part of a system, but concluded that it was a fixture, and all other things passing it in panoramic view: but now that he has brought within his certain knowledge, that the earth is a perpetual moving globular body, and that it is surrounded by millions of other such bodies, millions of miles apart, even to infinity, it behoves him to reject all Apostles' Creeds, or the Creeds of ignorant councils, and not encourage what Mr. Paine called a mental lying—a wilful self-delusion. I conclude, therefore, that man ought not to "believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and Earth," or to form any ideas of a distinct being as God. The human mind can form some idea of the material system of the universe, but it cannot form any idea of a God distinct from that system. There is no God but the Natural or Material God, of which man and every other animal, vegetable, and mineral, is part and parcel; and this idea of God is the most sublime of any that can be formed, because this alone acknowledges him to be infinite. But to this God I do not apply design or perception, or any thing like the quality of animal will.

"And in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord." I

would ask you, Mr. Justice Bailey, if God be the common Parent, or Father, how can Jesus Christ be his *only Son*? Cannot you perceive a contradiction in this? Or do you not, like Ovid and other heathen writers, bring your idol Jehovah to the same level with Jupiter, and make him fond of women? I cannot trust myself to say what the mind suggests as the natural inference of the above phrase. It would come under the denomination of what we call indecency or obscenity.

"Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost." This is another gross, unnatural idea. If we take the Holy Ghost to have been the paternal organ of generating Jesus, we know that he could impregnate, but not conceive. The act of conception is the maternal part of generation. It is a ridiculous solecism to say that Jesus "was conceived by the Holy Ghost." We never read of any female Ghosts, even in the Jew Books.

"Born of the Virgin Mary" is another solecism. To have contended for the virginity of Mary, the alleged Mother of Jesus, it would have looked better if she had never been espoused to Joseph. The tale is very badly managed even in the miraculous part of it. The word Virgin Mother is retained under an idea of giving a purity and supernatural quality to Jesus, but the Grecians were vain enough to raise the same story for Plato some hundred years before the Christian era. A similar tale is common among the Brahmins of India, and has existed from time immemorial, or sufficiently long to encourage the conjecture that the story of Jesus and his Virgin Mother has been borrowed from the one or the other of those people. There is such an incongruity in the ideas of child-birth and virginity, that I will not insult the understandings of those who will read this Letter with the least comment upon it.

"Suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried," is all reasonable enough, because it is natural that tyranny and martyrdom should be united. I speak generally, for I do not believe the tale of Jesus Christ—I hold it to be a fiction. I do not believe in the past existence of any such person. I assert, that there is nothing like authentic history to support even the natural part of the books called the Gospels. I can find no trace of Christians at Jerusalem before its destruction by Titus; and until the contrary can be shewn, it is vain to tell us that Jesus Christ died there, or that the Christian religion originated there.

The writings of Tacitus have been brought against me as

a proof that the Christians were known as a sect before the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. Tacitus certainly does speak of the sect of Christians being known at Rome two years before the destruction of Jerusalem, but he in nowise proves, or even says, that they were known in Jerusalem before its destruction. You, Sir, with many others, admit that there were no Christians in Jerusalem at the time of its destruction by Titus, which was seventy years after the alleged birth of Christ. It is admitted by all, that the Christians had become a numerous sect at the commencement of the second century, and Mr. Gibbon has shewn that Tacitus did not write his account of the persecution of the Christians by Nero until about the year 130, or not until he was sixty years of age. Tacitus was an infant during Nero's reign, consequently, he was no eye-witness of the persecutions spoken of; and it is as likely, or more likely, that they were Jews who were persecuted, as the early Christians, as well as the Jews, in Rome, were known by the common appellation of Galileans.

Mr. Gibbon himself throws in his doubt of the authenticity of the account of Tacitus, and seems to think that he has made up from common rumour what he could not learn from public records, respecting the origin of the Christian sect, and the death of Christ by a sentence of Pontius Pilate. Others have asserted, that, like the celebrated passage in the works of Josephus, the account is the fabrication and interpolation of some Christian after the death of Tacitus. But be it as it will, Tacitus is no authority for the existence of the Christian sect in Jerusalem before its destruction, whilst the silence of Josephus, and the elder Pliny, is negative evidence that no such sect was then and there known. I admit the existence of the Christian sect as extensive at the close of the first century of the alleged Christian era, but I can nowhere, out of their own writings, trace the least account of them within the first sixty years of that era; nor can it be shewn where they first originated, or the precise time when, or upon what opinions and principles they first established themselves as a distinct sect. The existing writings of the Christians are nothing more than legends, fabricated after a church and orders had been established among them.

"He descended into Hell." There is no such place: the assertion is a fiction—a lie.

"The third day he rose again from the dead." This part of the sentence would not be worth a word, was it not

from the extensive existing belief of a resurrection to life being the fate of all dead human bodies. Whence this disgusting and ridiculous idea originated it is difficult now to say, but I verily think it an emanation of the Pythagorean doctrine of the transmigration of souls, or the sensitive part of the body. Nothing in the books of the Old Testament warrants the notion of eternal life to one being, but there is much Atheistical or material language to be found scattered throughout it. Beyond the New Testament, we read of nothing concerning such sects as Pharisees and Sadducees among the Jews, that is to say, the books of the Old Testament do not mention them, although their existence, at the time of the origin of Christianity, is certain from the evidence of Josephus. There was also the sect of Essenes, who were the evident originators of the monastic life, and who in all probability were among those who first apostatized from Judaism to the doctrines of Christianity, or who assisted in laying its foundation, as all the sects of the Jews were scattered throughout the Roman provinces from the time of their first subjection to the Roman arms.

Common sense, without the aid of science, might have been thought sufficient to have pointed out to the knowledge of the most shallow thinker, that the human body, like all other animal bodies, rotted and evaporated. There was daily demonstration of it to every human being, even if they were ignorant of its process, and of all the gaseous properties of matter. Yet some Christians have been stupidly blind enough to hold that the same flesh should be raised again—ignorant of a perpetual change in the same flesh even during the life of the body. It is asserted in the New Testament, and in this Book of Common Prayer, in the Athanasian Creed, that Jesus rose with the same flesh, and that this his rising from the dead was a guarantee for the resurrection of the whole human race. Pythagoras was much more rational, he allowed the same sort of soul to one animal as to another, and the same to a vegetable as to the whole.

That every body of every animal and every vegetable does rise from the dead is scientifically demonstrable upon the gaseous principle of matter; but that it does not rise with a sense of former existence, is equally demonstrable, as sensitive power is the result of peculiar organization, and of that alone. The matter which composes my body, or that of any other person, has existed from all eternity, but I have no sense of former existence; the matter that does

now compose my body will exist to all eternity as to the future, but the moment death stifles my organic powers, I, as a distinct sensitive being, shall be annihilated, in every sense of the word; the matter which will compose my body at death will know nothing more of what it has been than I now know what it was a hundred years back. This is the proper mode of reflection upon the mischievous and immoral doctrine of resurrection from the dead, and eternal life to distinct beings. It is time that we gave up such false, such frail, such vain, such ridiculous notions, and learn to improve our time properly through the life we know and feel to be real, by studiously endeavouring to lessen the preponderating sum of animal pain and misery.

"He ascended into Heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty." This point is denied and refuted by the comment on the first article.

"From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead." The *quick*, I presume, must mean the *living*. This is a notion confined to the Christian Church, whose adherents taught a final consummation of all earthly things. The Jews and Mahometans, I believe, never had any idea of an end to any thing of the kind.

"I believe in the Holy Ghost." This you are very careful to tell us means "The Holy Spirit:" but if you, Mr. Justice Bailey, believe in this Holy Spirit, you ought to be able to describe it to us, at least. What shape does it take, and what are its component parts? Do you shake your head and blush at the impiety of the questions? Follow the truth, follow what is virtuous and moral, and you will never need to blush, or to punish others for thinking different to yourself.

"The Holy Catholic Church." You tell us this does not mean the Church of Rome. It was so meant when it was first written, as then that Church was in the plenitude of its power, and there was nothing worthy of being called a dissension from it in Europe, unless it was the Greek Church, and the only difference between them was a dispute about the manner in which the three Gods proceeded out of each other, and as to the propriety of exhibiting them in images and pictures.

"The communion of Saints." This you say is "what the Scripture calls 'the fellowship' between God and true believers; the participation true believers have in the favour and good-will of God, and also the common bond or union among Christians, considering them members of that body

of which our Saviour Christ is the head, and looking to the common object they have of advancing God's glory, acknowledging his goodness, &c." This is altogether a perverted sense of the meaning of the phrase. It meant, when first written, that there was such a place as Heaven, that the Saints so called who quitted this life met again there, and held communion, and that they were capacitated to make intercession with the Rulers of Heaven for persons on earth, and thus prayers were put up to those Saints for that purpose, and are to this day in the true Catholic Church. But even Mr. Justice Bailey is ashamed of one-half the nonsense practised in the ceremonies of the Christian idolatry, and thus swerves from a true statement of it.

"The forgiveness of sins." Far better is it to convince mankind that sins cannot naturally be forgiven; that it is not in the power of man or God to do it; better to shew them that sin or vice carries its own punishment with it, which no power can forgive or redeem. This is the fact: it is a maxim of Nature, that virtue or vice should carry their own rewards with them. It is a most important doctrine to teach mankind and make them fully sensible of it. Let any vicious character ask himself the question; let him say whether his vices have not created a place of mental torment, and perhaps corporeal torments as well. Let the virtuous man answer the question; let him say whether he does not feel happy; whether his virtue and its consequences are not his greatest reward, or whether he has need of more. The Christian religion is the parent and encourager of crime; it cherishes vice under a mistaken notion of mercy, and for the sake of forgiveness.

"The resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting." This is a subject I have fully treated of already, but in a summary manner I will just say here, that this doctrine appears to have emanated from the doctrines of Pythagoras, that there was a portion of every animal and vegetable that could not die, but that at the death of the substance, passed from one thing to another. Out of this doctrine, it appears, grew up the sect of Pharisees among the Jews, and out of this scattered sect, with the sect of Essenes, who might probably have met with the writings of Plato, and other Grecian philosophers in some of the Roman provinces, I verily think was engendered the still more ridiculous dogmas of the Christian religion. Whether the books of the New Testament were first written by apostate Jews, or by Grecoians, it is very difficult to say, and impossible to prove, as

under the Roman conquests there was a complete amalgamation of all nations and all sects then known. The origin of the Christian religion is involved in such obscurity, that it is impossible to trace where it originated, the precise time when, or the exact principles upon which it first gained strength, amidst the contempt of all who were considered respectable under the Roman empire.

It first made its way among the slaves and dregs of the Roman people, and I verily believe began with very different principles to those now professed. Atheism and licentiousness of manners were among the first charges made against the Christians; and when the impartial historian shall safely work upon the rise and fall of the Christian religion, he will most likely discover, that the origin of the sect was from a peculiar practice of the most impure parts of the Pagan mysteries, over which a cloak of morality was attempted to be thrown as a safeguard from Pagan laws. In the polished times of Pliny the younger, and Tacitus, above one hundred years after the alleged era of Jesus, the Christian sect was denominated not only contemptible, but execrable in manners. At no period of the existence of the sect would these or any other philosophers have viewed them in a different light. Thus much for the Apostle's Creed.

R. CARLILE.

Dorchester Gaol, April 7, 1822,
of the Era of the Carpenter's Wife's Son.

TO MR. RICHARD CARLILE.

CITIZEN AND FRIEND, Manchester, March 28, 1822.
As a test of our admiration for your past conduct, we have forwarded you a further subscription of £6. 1s. 4d. towards the fines which the enemies of the human race have levied upon you. We sincerely hope the people are sufficiently enlivened to a sense of their own danger to rally round you, and lend you all the assistance in their power. You have commenced war against the whole host of tyrants and impostors. You have formed the forlorn hope, and if you have to pay one penny towards your fines, it will shew the people are not prepared for freedom. Nevertheless, your name will be engraven on the breast of every virtuous man,

of every friend to the human race, who has seen your publications, your Spartan-like conduct will be remembered to the latest generations, while those locusts that combine to protect their plunder and enslave the mind, will sink into insignificance and contempt; the reflecting part of the people know, that while there are so many millions of money drained from the earnings of the industrious, to support a set of sinecurists, pensioners, and drones; mere tools to a corrupt to a mocked ministry whose sole aim is to tyrannize and plunder those whom they are appointed to serve, there can be neither liberty, peace, and happiness. The majority of the people know the ill effects of this system, yet they have hitherto been divided among themselves for want of a sound principle to act upon. America was much in such a situation until Paine's "Common Sense" was published; the people read it, acted upon it, and became free! That Noble of Nature seeing the good effect of his exertions and honest principles endeavoured to emancipate his own countryman by that immortal work the "Rights of Man," which should be considered as the Reformers Guide. To those principles they must come at last, as nothing beneath them will be of lasting benefit. Away with the words Moderate Reform, or even Universal Suffrage, they are too vague; they cannot be pure whilst two distinct hereditary bodies are remaining to corrupt them. We must strike at the root of corruption instead of lopping its branches. Let us unite upon sound principles, and be indefatigable in promoting them among those who do not understand them. Go on, worthy Sir, in the noble cause you have embarked in: yours is a struggle for reason and the Rights of Man, and must ultimately succeed. The dogmas of our tyrants are put to the test and found wanting: they have even brought in the arm of power to protect that which they say is of divine origin!

Please to give our thanks and respects to your worthy Partner, likewise your Sister, who was condemned unheard for selling a pamphlet containing one page of argument respecting the Jew Books.

I have been contending for the same principles upwards of thirty years, but still hope to see the emancipation of mankind from Kingcraft and Priestcraft.

I remain, your Fellow Citizen,

JAMES THOMSON,
64, Tickle Street, Manchester.

Subscriptions from Manchester.

	s.	d.		s.	d.
James Thomson	3	0	Robert Tattersal	0	6
Charles Thomson	2	0	James Wood Chorlton	0	6
William Campion	7	0	Roger Bessex	0	3
Joseph Telford	7	0	Robert Dixon	0	2
James Wheeler	5	0	Three true Republicans	4	0
John Gratrix	4	0	A Nottingham Man	0	6
James Williams	3	6	Collected by Citizen John Bot-		
Charles Knaseby	3	0	tomley for the Use of the		
Robert Robinson	3	0	bravest of the Brave—he has		
Anos Pots	3	0	likewise sent his Mite	1	0
Robert Smith	2	6	Susannah Cook, a well-known old		
Frederick Faulkner	1	0	Radical	0	6
Thomas Darlington	1	0	Matthew Lightgo	0	6
John Dean	1	6	A Looker-on at Peterloo, and has		
John McConnel	1	0	not forgot it yet	1	0
John Gradwell	1	4	A poor Welchman, of the vale of		
William Waddington	1	0	Cloyd, an Admirer of Mr. Car-		
John Chorlton	1	4	life's Principles	7	6
Joseph Chorlton	1	4	An Exciseman	3	3
Elizabeth Yates	1	4	A true Friend to Liberty, with a		
Mary Walker	1	6	Promise to send his Mite every		
Hard Peter	1	4	Time there is a Subscription		
Thomas Cope	1	4	made	0	6
Samuel Hulme	1	4	George Washington	0	6
A Dairy-Maid	1	6	R. Lard	1	0
Joseph Gibson	1	2	T. Hurst hazel	1	6
James Bessex	1	6	Matthew, chap. x. ver. 34, 35, 36	2	6
Robert Brownbill	1	6	Thomas Paine for ever,		
Thomas Longthorn	1	0	None so bold and clever,		
John Stephenson	1	0	Man's wrongs to oppose		
David Sumner	1	0	With deadly blows,		
Alexander Murray	4	0	And the soaring wings		
Adam Booth	1	0	Of Priests and Kings		
James Robinson	1	0	To strip of every feather	2	6
James Wood Green	0	6	Liberty of the Press	0	6
Mr. Aberdeen	0	4	One of the Nine Wise-acres	1	0
J. S. by John Dean	0	3	An Enemy to Iron Bed-stocks,		
Arthur Irwell	0	3	such as Mary Ann Carlile		
James Rhone	0	8	sleeps on	1	0
Samuel Kenyon	1	4	John B.	2	6
Thomas Owen	0	6	An Enemy to Priestcraft	0	6
Mrs. Gaunt	0	4	An Enemy to the Black Slugs		
William Hulme	0	3	that devour the Tenth of every		
E. Higgins	0	6	Man's Labour	2	6
E. Hyle	0	4	Edward Jones	0	6
Sarah Chorlton	0	9	Miss Ann, a Republican	0	9
Michael Paxton	0	6	A poor Potatoe-wheeler	0	2
James Millner	0	6	Thomas Barlow	0	6
William Gladston	0	6	An old Republican Spinner	0	6
James Elliot	0	6	An Hibernian Republican	1	0

TO MR. JAMES THOMSON, 64, TICKLE-STREET,
MANCHESTER.

CITIZEN AND FRIEND, Dorchester Gaol, April 7, 1822.

MY greatest pleasure consists in corresponding with the Republicans of the country, and that pleasure is considerably heightened by the daily assurance of an extensive spread in their numbers. We have no fear of the falling off of a single man who has once his mind imbued with republican principles, who has once conceived those principles upon which alone any thing like true liberty can be obtained—a representative system of government, where the power of every man is equal, and a mutual recognition of rights the common disposition.

Republicans of Manchester, that association which was called the union of Reformers amongst you, is now dissolved, owing to a lack of sound principles necessary to its preservation: that which is called the Great Northern Radical Union is a very *little* concern, a paltry set out, and that too must fall from the same cause as the former; as there is not one good principle connected with its avowed object, which was not altogether the case of the former unions, as there was at least a mutual instruction. It is now your duty, Republicans, to unite in every way that you can make yourselves better known to each other, and for mutual conference and instruction. A reading society, a public library of useful books, and a hall or house wherein you may occasionally assemble for conference, form the only necessary grounds of union, and would tend much to counteract the disuniting effects of assembling in an ale-house. As this is a measure that may be gradually accomplished, the most trifling periodical expence among one hundred persons would keep up a very respectable union and connection, and form an excellent and rational source of amusement and pastime. Suppose one or two persons, as may be agreed, to take a large house, or a house that may contain one or two or more large rooms that may be appropriated to public purposes; let the house have a shop in which may be sold every liberal publication, or every thing calculated to serve the cause of reform: let a library be formed in the house, and let the subscriptions to this library, and for the use of the public room or rooms, be a

sufficiency to enable the proprietor, in connection with his other business, to meet the rent, rates and taxes attending so large a concern, and derive a comfortable living from the joint connection. As a mark of distinction, let this house and shop be called the Temple of Reason, or any other designation the proprietor or subscribers may choose; and here, at a very moderate expence, a focus of union and instruction would be formed that would most certainly go on improving. The thing being in the hands of one or two individuals would be sure to be kept up, because there would be no danger from the secession of an individual subscriber of dissolving the concern, and the more the proprietor improved it, the better chance of support would he have. The proprietor being always on the premises, and a public shop connected with it, there would always be free admission to subscribers, which would tend to prevent the place being over crowded at set times. I can conceive how such a place can be supported by the subscription of a very few pence weekly from each individual, when the number exceeded one hundred. I can conceive how it may be gradually improved by this small subscription so as to become a most important philosophic institution. The only qualification to be received as a subscriber should be sobriety and approved moral character: in every other respect there should be a perfect equality.

I take the liberty, Republicans of Manchester, to lay this suggestion before you, and, in such a town as Manchester, I am of opinion the only thing necessary to ensure success, is for one or two individuals to make the speculation. However, I would have it understood that this was a Republican association, and that Republicans only should be deemed eligible subscribers. It may be open to women as well as men if any approve and wish to subscribe. There is always a grace and a guarantee for good manners when virtuous females form part of any association.

There is nothing like union to effect any purpose; but morally speaking, we had better be without union if it be not made upon sound principles; such principles as, if challenged with, we shall not be ashamed to avow and defend. Union, in the States of America, upon any thing but Republican principles, would never have accomplished their independence. Such will be the case in this country, for such is the natural consequence of such measures. We will unite with any persons who will shew us we are wrong; if they cannot do this, we invite them to unite with us on our principles.

Republicans of Manchester, I return you my thanks for your further subscriptions towards my fines, and your continued support of the principles of a representative system of government that shall recognize no priests nor hereditary rulers. Yours is the meed of perseverance in conscious rectitude and unimpeachable principles: yours is the satisfaction that no man can reproach you with delusion, nor apathy, nor corrupt motives.

I am, Citizen, gratefully yours,
R. CARLILE.

LEEDS PUBLIC MEETING.

ON Monday, December 17, 1821, a Public Meeting was held at the Union Room, Richmond Hill, for the purpose of taking into consideration the propriety of sending an Address to Sir Charles Wolseley, Bart. and also to further the Great Northern Union.

MR. JOSEPH WASS in the Chair,

Who opened the business, by stating the object for which they were met.
 Mr. MASON.—Gentlemen, in moving that an address be presented to Sir Charles Wolseley, an Address of Congratulation on his liberation from a cruel and unjust incarceration, you will permit me to make a few observations, though I think that you, with me, will admit that no arguments need be urged, in order to prove the propriety of such an Address being sent. We need only glance at the conduct of persons in the higher ranks of life, to enable us duly to appreciate the services of such gentlemen as Sir Charles Wolseley. Such are the fascinating charms of power and courtly influence, that few of our high-bred pretended patriots have been able to resist them: and events of no very distant date, have presented us with instances of such characters descending from the Temple of Liberty to the Cavern of Vulcan, for the purpose of forging thunderbolts, to hurl at the heads of such patriots who still remained to fill the ranks of freedom, which those apostates had so recently deserted. I need not name such characters to you, Gentlemen: they are too well known. I need not remind you of the conduct of our late Heaven-born Minister; that grand apostate and munificent rewarder of apostacy. I need not name to you some of our modern lords and knights, with their trusty esquires, who still profess themselves the advocates of liberty, but who, when they do venture to pronounce her sacred name, they do it so feebly and falteringly, that one would almost imagine they were conscious of the danger of violating the third Commandment, and were about to take the name of the Lord in vain:—and what do these instances of apostacy and supineness teach us, Gentlemen?—What, but the necessity of a Reform, and a Radical Reform too, in our Representative System. They are a few amongst ten thousand instances, of the dangerous policy of intrusting too much power to individuals:—they shew us that the people are the legitimate source of power; and for them to give the reins out of their own hands, is as dangerous an expedient, as of the foolish

God, of fabled memory, who permitted his hair-brained son to guide the Chariot of the Sun. Yet, although we can number but few genuine patriots in the higher ranks of life, at the present day, Sir Charles Wolseley stands amongst the foremost of that few; he generously stepped forth to advocate the people's cause. His rank in society must acquit him of any sinister motive. Should it be urged that he had ambition to gratify, and therefore he courted the applause of the people; to such an insinuation I would only again point to his elevated situation in life, which would certainly afford him a greater scope for the gratification of ambitious views, than advocating the cause of an injured and despised people could do. We infer then that he has been actuated by disinterested motives; that he is indeed a patriot, and worthy of our highest esteem; we therefore cordially congratulate him on his restoration to liberty:—we sincerely rejoice that his fetters are broken; that the arrows of corruption, as they respect him, are spent; and that he is once more at liberty to assist, by his personal efforts, and his influence, that sacred cause in which he has so recently suffered. We can do but little, Gentlemen, by way of compensating our suffering patriots, for God's sake, then let not that little be withheld. We can, at least, tell them, that we approve of their conduct, and give them our thanks for their exertion; and if we cordially enter into the plan recommended by Mr. Hunt, for promoting the Great Northern Union, we shall be able to do more, we shall be enabled to place them in a situation where they can serve the cause more effectually, where they will have the opportunity of perpetually harassing corruption, and combating her on something like level ground. Any plan, Gentlemen, that will tend in the most remote degree, to forward the cause of Radical Reform in our Representative System, ought to have our most cordial support, as for what is termed a Moderate Reform, I contend would be no Reform. Why are we refused a Radical Reform, because, those who now hold the reins of power, would, in giving it, have at the same time to give them into the hands of the people, and such a measure they are not disposed to adopt; and should they be induced to grant us a Moderate Reform, which, I believe, would be very moderate indeed, we should still be subject to their caprice, and what they pleased to grant us to day, they might, if they pleased, deprive us of to-morrow, in short they would still be our masters, and we should continue to be their slaves. No, Gentlemen, this will not do, for I am persuaded that nothing short of a Radical Reform, will overthrow the power of corruption, nothing short of a full and equal representation of the people, can stay the hand of tyranny, or break the yoke of oppression, and this, I contend, will do it, and it is all that we, as Reformers, have at present to do with. When the people are indeed represented, then let them speak, and they will then be heard, let them then complain, and as far as is within the compass of possibility, their grievances will then be redressed. Here then I take my stand, on the right of Britons to a full and equal representation, and I will not be diverted from my station, by any lo heres, or lo theres, for I consider it founded upon a rock, which rock is the basis of all public liberty, and neither the wild schemes of the visionary, the subtlety of the sophist, nor the anathemas of the abettors of corruption, shall ever be able to prevail against it.

Mr. MANN, in seconding the motion said:—Gentlemen, I have much pleasure in coming forward to second the address to Sir Charles Wolseley, whose patriotic conduct and uniform exertions in the people's cause, are deserving of the gratitude and esteem of every true friend to his country. When a man, high in rank and property, comes fearlessly forward to ad-

vocate the cause of the oppressed, regardless of the threats of contending factions, and joins heart and hand with the people in the sacred cause of liberty, we should be unworthy the name of Britons did we not congratulate so distinguished a patriot on the termination of his incarceration, and on his safe return to the bosom of his family and friends. Sir C. Wolseley has proved himself the friend of the persecuted Reformers; in 1819 he voluntarily and unsolicited flew to Manchester, to give bail for Mr. Hunt and the other persecuted Reformers there. He generously came forward to give bail for Messrs. Johnson, Bagguley, and Drummond, at Chester; and at a moment's notice, he went to give bail for Mr. Lewis, at Coventry. Imprisonment has not damped his ardour, nor diminished his exertions, in the cause of Radical Reform: he has accepted the office of General Treasurer to the Great Northern Union of Radical Reformers, recommended by that illustrious champion of liberty, Mr. Hunt, an union which every true friend to Reform ought to encourage and support. The Reformers have too long been like a rope of sand, without Union or leader. Divide and conquer is the maxim of tyrants; let our motto be, "Unite and be free." Conscious of the justice of our cause, and animated by a sense of our duty to our country, let us place in the House of Commons, those tried and able Radical Reformers who will prove themselves the asserters of our rights. Then it may be said that we have come to close quarters with the Boroughmongers; let men of all religious persuasions, sally round the standard of Reform, and join heart and hand in the sacred cause of liberty.

TO SIR CHARLES WOLSELEY, BART.

SIR,

WE should consider ourselves guilty of a dereliction of duty, and also wanting the common sensibility of our nature, did we not avail ourselves of an early opportunity to congratulate you on your emancipation from a tedious and unmerited incarceration. We most cordially rejoice with you on your return to the comforts of the domestic circle, to the delightful intercourse of friendship, and to that portion of liberty which none but the violators of the peace of society ought ever to be deprived of, but we are assured, and so must every Briton, whose heart has not been petrified by the waters of corruption, that you have only been suffering in a righteous cause, and we know that your consciousness of integrity, and the justice of the cause which subjected you to suffering, would not fail to alleviate such suffering. Yes, Sir, we are assured, that the manly, virtuous, and disinterested efforts, which you have used in the cause of freedom, would clothe you with armour which would blunt the darts that the minions of power have been hurling at you from their self-erected eminence, and enable you, although their captive, to tell them you would scorn to exchange situations with them. When, Sir, we contemplate your rank in life, and the exertions you have made in the cause of rational liberty, whilst we admire your disinterested zeal, we also exult in the possession of so cogent an argument, as that which your exertion afforded us in support of our claims; for is it to be supposed, that an independent gentleman of family and fortune, would advocate the claims of the people, if such claims were adverse to the interests of that part of the community to which such a gentleman was particularly connected? No, Sir, we know that you see, and every enlightened Briton must see, that were the people in full possession of their rights, our constitution has sufficiently provided in the aristocracy and the power of the king to strengthen that aristocracy against any undue

encroachment of the people; but, at present, who does not perceive that these two branches of the legislature retain their full weight in the scale, whilst that of the people is considerably lessened; and then that equal power of which we have heard so much is destroyed; and thus it is that the only barrier which should shield us from the attacks of corruption is thrown down, and her waves have rushed upon our Constitution like a deluge, and washed away almost every vestige of our liberty. But we have beheld you, Sir, nobly stand forth to stem the noxious tide, we have heard you fearlessly demand the restoration of the people's rights; for which services, believe us, Sir, we cannot be ungrateful, and still will we indulge the hope that the time is not far distant when you, accompanied by your compatriots, who like yourself have suffered in the glorious cause, shall be found legislating for a free people. In the meantime permit us to express our unqualified approbation of your political proceedings, with our confidence in your future exertions, and with our best wishes for your health and happiness, we remain, Sir, with every feeling of respect and esteem,

THE REFORMERS OF LEEDS.

Mr. J. BRAYSHAW then addressed the meeting as follows:—

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, In coming forward on the present occasion, I candidly tell you at once, that I should consider myself guilty of a gross neglect of duty, if I should allow the address which has just been read to be put to the vote without proposing an amendment. I trust that the reasons which I shall bring forward will be such as to show that I am justified in my present conduct. In my own opinion the address which has just read is unworthy the support of any set of men who profess to be the advocates of universal freedom, or who are desirous to raise man to that dignity for which he has evidently been designed by nature. In the first place, I consider the address is degrading to ourselves, by making distinctions which nature and reason do not justify. In the next place, I consider that the allusion to the British Constitution, is an allusion to a phantom which can only tend to delude and mislead the unwary; and I further consider that its acknowledgment of peculiar rights belonging to hereditary governors, is an acquiescence in fraud, folly, and stupidity.

As to the first point, I consider that we degrade ourselves whenever we submit to make rank, title, or fortune, the grounds of distinction. The only distinction which rational men ought to make, should be founded on the possession of talent, and the virtuous exercise of such talent for the benefit of the whole human race. Now, in my opinion, that part of the address, which says, "Is it to be supposed, that an independent gentleman of family and fortune would advocate the claims of the people, if such claims were adverse to the interest of that part of the community with which such gentleman was particularly connected," evidently makes his merit to consist in his rank in society, and supposes him to be jealous of those vain distinctions which folly and barbarity have created amongst men. For my own part I cannot entertain so mean an opinion of Sir Charles Wolseley, I consider that he is an individual who despises the nick-names called titles, and the exclusive privileges attached thereto, and that he has risen above the exclusive interest of a party, that he may appear in the character of the philanthropist and the man.

That the allusion to the British Constitution is an allusion to a phantom, I assert without fear of contradiction, and on this point I have no occasion to bring further proof, until some one will condescend to tell me

where the constitution is, or where this wonder, "the envy and admiration of the world," may be found. I boldly defy any man in existence to produce it or to tell me what it is.

It may not be amiss on the present occasion to make a little enquiry into the consistency of those gentlemen who are so very ready to boast of the constitution of our ancestors, and who appear desirous of bringing us back to the state we were in some hundreds of years ago. For my own part I am of opinion that we now possess more liberty than our ancestors ever did; the truth is we are not more enslaved; but we have become wiser, and consequently more impatient of slavery. It must be evident to any man who reads the history of this country, that we have no records of any period when this country possessed a true representation in the Commons' House. If our ancestors had any constitution, it was evidently nothing but the constitution of brute force or military despotism introduced by the Norman conquest. The will of a conqueror was their constitution, and they were to every intent and purpose a conquered people. Our present race of kings and aristocracy were forced upon the people at the conquest, and I maintain that a conquered people have always the right of reconquest. Every addition made to the liberty of the people since the conquest, has been nothing more than a partial reconquest, the nature of the government has continued the same. Most of the contests that have taken place have been nothing more than struggles for power amongst the conquerors, or quarrels that have sprung up about dividing the spoil; in these quarrels the liberty of the people has rarely been attended to. The liberty of the people at large must not be founded on contests like those of our ancestors, every addition which has yet been made to their liberty has arisen from their becoming more enlightened, and their future liberty must arise from the progress of reason and philosophy. If we refer even to that boasted document called Magna Charta, what benefit has it produced to the people at large. It was evidently obtained by the irritated Barons, in order to secure themselves against the oppression of the chief tyrant, whilst they all conspired to keep the great mass of the people in ignorance and degradation. Most of our other boasted public documents were obtained under similar circumstances, and they are equally useless to the great body of the people.

The folly and absurdity of hereditary government, whether kings or members of an aristocracy, must be evident to every man who reflects for a single moment. The assertion which Mr. Mason has just made, that "Sir Charles is the only English baronet who has come forward to advocate the rights of the people," is sufficient to show the evil of an hereditary aristocracy, and to convince any rational man, that to support such an order, as a distinct order in the state, is directly in opposition to the interests of the people. In fact, the interest of a free people, and the interests of an aristocracy are completely in opposition one to the other. It is absolutely impossible for both to exist together. Aristocracy always engenders corruption. Either the people must be slaves, or the aristocracy must fall into contempt. By what I have already said, I think I have shown the impropriety of the original address, and I beg leave to conclude by proposing the following amendment, in which I trust the objections I have brought against the original address will be obviated, and I hope it will be more consistent with the feelings of Sir Charles Wolseley, as a friend to universal freedom.

TO SIR CHARLES WOLSELEY, BART.

SIR,

We take the liberty of presenting to you our congratulations on your return from a dreary confinement to the enjoyments of domestic life, more particularly on account of your confinement having been occasioned by your exertions in the cause of justice and humanity.

We detest flattery, and we behold, with a mixture of pity and contempt, the conduct of those who attach importance to rank, fortune, or titles, or who follow the name of the popular leader of the day in which they live, without regard to the principles by which such character may be actuated. In congratulating you on your return from a dreary confinement to the enjoyments of domestic life, and in expressing our admiration of your conduct, we trust that we shall not be found guilty of the practice which we condemn in others, but we hope our commendation of yourself will be such as may be used without degrading ourselves to the character of sycophants. When we contemplate the situation in which you are placed, and consider that you are yourself possessed of rank, title, and fortune, and that you may justly be considered as being placed beyond the reach of those privations and miseries which afflict so large a portion of your countrymen, we cannot sufficiently admire the benevolence which has marked your conduct in exposing yourself to danger by advocating the rights of those who have hitherto been kept in slavery by the artifices of men in power. We feel satisfied that your conduct in this respect could only arise from a pure desire to elevate man to his native dignity, by the establishment of a system of pure Representative Government, under which all shall enjoy equal liberty and protection.

That men who daily feel the severity of the iron hand of oppression, men whose lives have been embittered by political and religious slavery, and whose every hope has been blasted by a degrading system, should be desirous to reform abuses, and to obtain for themselves a voice in the choice of those who exercise authority in making or executing the laws, by which their liberty, their property, and their lives are affected, is naturally to be expected. To such the motives are sufficiently strong to induce them to action. But on you, in the situation in which you are placed, these motives can have little effect, the only selfish motive which can actuate your mind must be the anticipation of the pleasure arising from having been instrumental in establishing justice, and promoting the moral elevation of man. A purer motive cannot actuate the breast of any human being. We feel satisfied that in advocating a system of pure Representative Government, thereby showing the dignity of man, and endeavouring to place him in his proper rank in creation, you will enjoy a degree of satisfaction in your own mind of which oppression cannot deprive you.

With the most ardent wishes for your health and happiness, and for the accomplishment of the political salvation of our country, we remain the sincere admirers of your past conduct.

THE REFORMERS OF LEEDS.

JAMES WATSON then stood forward, and said:—

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen, I beg leave to second the amended Address for two reasons, First, because I consider it to be practising an imposition upon the people to talk of a settled Constitution, when no such thing has existence; and Secondly, because I consider a pure Representative Republic as the only system that can ensure us permanent liberty.

Gentlemen, I am happy you have not suffered the exertions of Sir Charles Wolseley to pass by in silence, but that you are now met to pay a tribute of gratitude which he so honourably and justly merits, for his sincerity in the cause of freedom. Need I draw your attention to the firmness he has shewn during his arbitrary and unjust incarceration; no, Gentlemen, his bold, his patriotic, and his manly language to the inhabitants of Birmingham, proves the ardour, the constancy, which animated him in so just a cause. Gentlemen, Sir Charles has told us that he was one of the first to mount the walls of the Bastille in France; I hope the same principles which then animated his heart and caused him to join the brave Republicans of France, in so brave, so humane, so just an action, are

still predominant in his mind. I would fain hope that Sir Charles is convinced that it is only upon the system of a true Representative Republic that our country can be rid of the infernal hand of tyranny, and be placed in that superior scale which nature intended for human beings when she brought them forth. A pure Representative form of Government is the only just and rational plan ever laid down to combine the greatest share of happiness for the least possible expence. Let us not then compromise one jot or tittle, but openly, and manfully advocate the only terms with which we can comply, so as not to surrender ourselves to be the sport of any set of political and religious despots. I boldly but respectfully call upon Sir Charles Wolseley to stand forward and propagate openly the principles of a pure Representative Republic; as the only one likely to ensure permanent happiness. A truth which I have no doubt is clear to his mind as the sun at noon-day. Let not the cries of the pretended British Constitution din his ears with its delusive sound, but proclaim it to the country as it is, a non-entity. Some want this wonderful thing, called the British Constitution, in its purity, but what purity can be attached to a phantom, a thing of the imagination, I am at a loss to imagine; for I assert it as a positive fact, that this wonder of wonders, this glory of Englishman, has not, nor ever had, existence.

Gentlemen, I am well aware what the interested and dependant knaves would have us to believe is a constitution, but their windy assertions are not going to deprive reason of its powers. No, then let us enumerate those prodigies called parts of our Constitution, they are the Magna Charta, Bill of Rights, Declaration of Rights, &c. &c. Before we proceed further let me ask you, Whether these or any one of them proceeded from the voice of the people, or a convention of the people's representatives, chosen for the express purpose of framing such laws, or constitutions? Gentlemen, the truth is obvious, they did not, for if we are to believe history, neither Magna Charta, the Bill of Rights, nor any other public record proceeded from the people. Perhaps some one will say, From whence did they proceed? They were wrested from despotic kings, who not content with rendering what are called the lower class slaves, but wanted to reign absolute likewise over a set of licensed robbers, called nobility: such was the case with the tyrant, King John, when the barons resisted him, and likewise that of the Popish James the Second, when the nobility, at present called Whigs, resorted to the same measure. Gentlemen, for my part I think, instead of supporting them, we ought to hold them in contempt, for I am apt to think had not the people been duped by those capricious despots, our country would have enjoyed a constitution in reality. A thing we shall never obtain until we take the making of it into our hands. We, the people, are the body from whom all power ought to be derived. If not, all other power is arbitrary, and a usurpation, and the people may and ought to resist it as such, that the only system of government may be established which can protect us against these despotisms, a pure Representative Republic. To the advocates of a mixed form of government, like ours, I say ye only want an opportunity to oppress the people, and, like the present tyrants, render them subservient to your caprice; for my own part, I think your actions require to be looked after more than the present sycophants who hold the reins of office.

Gentlemen, we must have a written body of laws, as a safeguard for the people against their tyrannical oppressors, and not laws which can be altered at the will of men in power. To the want of a written body of laws, or a real constitution, may be attributed the passing of indemnity bills, and thousands of a similar nature, all of which put together have reduced Englishmen to their present degraded situation. Let us then speak to the people the language of truth, and point out to them their true interest, and not suffer them to be the dupes of deceitful factions. I hope Sir Charles Wolseley will be found directing the principles of the people to the fixed and immutable standard of a pure Representative Republic: principles which are at the present time animating the breasts of millions. Let us unite for this purpose, for unity upon any other basis than this is not worth the consideration of a great and enlightened people. Let us hope the beautiful structure of Republicanism will be erected on the ruins of despotism, and the Temple of Freedom have all the world for its worshippers.

Mr. BRAITHWAITE spoke to the following effect:—

Fellow Townsmen, I am sorry to hear the term visionary applied to Mr. Brayshaw merely because he is the friend and advocate of Republicanism; but I beg leave to say, that if he has been thus branded merely because the system which he advocates appears to be instantly unattainable, then the advocates of what is generally understood by the term Radicalism are equally visionary, because Radicalism is equally unattainable. Neither the one or the other will or can be obtained until the present system of Government be completely abolished.

With regard to my own opinion, I beg leave to say that I prefer a pure Representative System of Government, because I think such a system more consistent with the real spirit of freedom, and more suitable to the dignity and nature of man, than any other system which can be established.

I now beg leave to call your attention to the situation of those brave men who for standing forward in the cause of freedom have been dragged from their homes and families and immured in prison; they have the first claim on the notice, regard, and liberality of the Reformers—common justice requires that their case be first attended to, to neglect them would reflect everlasting disgrace on the Reformers as a body. These men expect, and they have a right to expect, that the friends of Reform will furnish them with every comfort which their circumstances require, and of which their case will admit, they are suffering in the people's cause, and the people ought to support them. Can any one be base enough to suppose that if those brave Reformers are neglected while in prison, they will ever again come forward in the cause of liberty? After many various arguments to excite the attention of the people to the suffering situation of our imprisoned friends, concluded by recommending unanimity and exertion upon sound and intelligible principles.

Mr. WARD, the preacher at the Christian Reformers' Chapel, who came in rather late, spoke at considerable length in favour of the original address, his principal topic was inveighing against the horror of the French Revolution in about the same kind of language that Burke made use of on the same subject, condemning all who supported the amended address as visionary, and declared that no one could vote for it, unless they were ready to deluge the streets with blood.

Mr. RICHARD WHINCUP supported the amendment in an able speech, and completely refuted the unprincipled doctrine of the Christian Reformer's Priest, and proved that it was the half-way Reformers that deluged France with the blood of the Republicans: he concluded by recommending future subscriptions to the Northern Union, to be applied to fighting the Bridge Street Gang, and to ameliorate the condition of the friends of freedom who were lingering in dungeons on gaol allowance, instead of the paltry avowed purpose of sending good men into a House where they could not remain uncorrupted.

Mr. JOSEPH HURTLEY followed on the same side:—

Mr. Chairman in giving my support to the amended address I can conscientiously say, that I am actuated by no other motive than that of the welfare of my fellow creatures, and because I think it is better calculated to promote it than the first address proposed to the meeting. I consider it is more respectful, since it is free of fulsome adulation, which can only give pleasure to weak minds, but is disgusting to people of sound judgment and good understanding. Let us do him honour by doing justice to his character, without insulting him by flattery, which is justly termed the nurse of crime, and as Sir Charles has not only declared himself to be a friend to liberty, but proved himself so by being one of the first to mount and scale the ramparts of the BASTILE in FRANCE. Let us give him an opportunity to place himself upon an eminence, to which not one of our modern self-called nobles has yet dared to aspire, by inviting him to take the lead in advocating a Republican, or a pure Representative SYSTEM of GOVERNMENT with an ELECTIVE MAGISTRACY; and thus raise a lasting and living monument to his name.

TO MR. RICHARD CARLILE.

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